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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Austria/Russian Zone

DATE: 25X1A

INFO. [REDACTED]

SUBJECT Secret Soviet Press Conference

DIST. 4 March 1947

PAGES 2

SUPPLEMENT 25X1X

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ORIGIN [REDACTED]

1. A secret press conference at Baden-Hellenthal on 18 - 20 February 1947 was attended only by personnel of the Soviet-operated newspapers and by press service representatives in eastern Austria. No members of the Austrian Communist press were present.
2. The meeting was presided over by Sorin, described by source as the emissary to Czechoslovakia of the Central Polit-Bureau in Moscow. G.F. Aleksandrov, assistant in the Ministry of Culture and Propaganda, was introduced at the conference as the head of the future Tass office in Austria. (Comment: An earlier report names an Andrei Mikhailovich Aleksandrov as Tass representative in Vienna).
3. Sorin reviewed the problems and the purpose of the propaganda in Czechoslovakia as indicative of the methods to be used in Austria.
4. The main points discussed were the following:
 - a. The independent character of each paper should be preserved with reference to criticism of the Austrian Government, so that the Austrian public will not suspect any unified propaganda. Above all, the present food and economic crisis should be used to solidify public opinion. Open attacks on political parties should be avoided at present in favor of concentrating on scandals among public figures who can be tied in with their parties at a specified time.
 - b. The Volkstimes criticism of the Socialist Party was described as premature. A new rapprochement must be sought, especially with the left-wing Socialists in an effort to win them to the Communist cause; simultaneously, this will cause a weakening of the Socialists as a group.

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ADSO	x	A DEP.	x	FBI		SPDF		VTO		x	OIR	x
DADSO		FBK		FBV		SPDS	x	B DEP.		x		
EXEC.		FBL		FBX		SPDT		CFCS		x		
CONTROL		FBM		FBZ		SCO		CTRB		x		
PLANS	x	FEP		SPDA		TRB	x					

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- c. The Soviet supervision of Austrian Communist papers is to be exercised through the distribution of propaganda assignments. Furthermore, the editorials in the Austrian Communist papers must be approved in Baden before publication. The Tass articles are censored in Moscow prior to their release in Austria.
5. Sorin announced that the Soviet Army paper, Oesterreichische Zeitung, will be discontinued after the withdrawal of Soviet troops and will be replaced by a German edition of Pravda to be published in Vienna.
6. The present Tass representative in Vienna will be replaced by a Tass office headed by Aleksandrov. Its articles will still be subject to censorship in Moscow prior to their transmittance to Vienna.
7. The subject of a second conference concerned the newspapers of the western provinces; all participants of the first conference were excluded from this second meeting.
8. The next conference is to be held early in March 1947.

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